

BATON ROUGE POLICE DEPARTMENT

General Order
No.134

Effective Date
11-01-1995

Revised Date
08-09-2018

Subject: Body Armor

Reviewed 8-9-2018

POLICY

It is the policy of the department to provide for officer safety, through the purchase and issue of body armor to all officers and field supervisors serving in the patrol division and such other specialized units as authorized by the Chief of Police.

The issued or approved body armor is to be used in conjunction with the practice of safe procedures and good judgment in tactical situations.

The following procedure is limited to departmentally purchased and issued body armor.

PROCEDURES

I. Issue and Replacement of Body Armor

- A. All body armor must comply with the current minimum protective standards prescribed by the National Institute of Justice. All issued body armor must be NIJ threat level II or higher.
- B. All officers will be issued body armor.
- C. Body armor that is worn or damaged by normal use will be replaced by the department. Body armor that must be replaced due to abuse or neglect will be paid for by the officer.
- D. Body armor will be replaced as necessary by the department, according to manufacturer's recommendations.
- E. Officers issued body armor will wear only the issued or other approved body armor.

II. Use of Body Armor

- A. Officers responding to calls for service are required to wear issued body armor while in class A and B uniforms.
- B. The Chief of Police may order the issued body armor worn by all officers or any specific unit at any time.
- C. The issued strike plate may be worn at the discretion of the individual officer, unless directed by the Chief of Police.

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III. Use of Plate Carriers

- A. The plate carrier is not intended to replace issued soft body armor, nor is it designed to be utilized as a "load bearing vest".
- B. Deployment of the plate carrier:
 - 1. All calls involving weapons;
 - 2. High threat calls where violence is probable; and
 - 3. Criminal patrol assignments in high crime areas.
- C. Permitted additional pouches for plate carrier:
 - 1. Medical Kit;
 - 2. Tourniquet; and
 - 3. Patrol rifle magazine pouch (if carrying an approved patrol rifle).
- D. Permitted patches on plate carrier: No additional patches shall be worn
 - 1. "POLICE" patch issued with carrier;
 - 2. Badge patch;
 - 3. Unit patch (for specialized divisions); and
 - 4. Name plate

III. Inspections of Body Armor

- A. Supervisors will be responsible for periodic, documented inspections to ensure that body armor is worn and maintained in proper condition. Body armor, if not worn, must be immediately available.
- B. Officers reporting for duty in violation of this order will be instructed to comply with the order. If the officer refuses, he will be relieved of duty and the infraction reported to the bureau commander.

IV. Care and Maintenance of Body Armor

- A. Each officer is responsible for the proper storage and care of body armor in accordance with manufacturer's instructions and daily inspection for signs of damage and general cleanliness.
- B. Dirt and perspiration may erode ballistic panels. Each officer will be responsible for cleaning his body armor in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
- C. Officers are responsible for reporting any damage or wear to the ballistic panels or cover to the supply officer.

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V. Innovations and Training

The Range Officer will be responsible for maintaining the following information:

- A. Technological advances in the body armor industry that may necessitate a change in body armor.
- B. A description of weapons and ammunition currently in use and whether or not issued body armor can withstand their impact.
- C. Training programs that inform the officers about body armor and emphasize its safe and effective use.
- D. Statistics on incidents where body armor has or has not protected officers from harm, including traffic accidents.